BRITISH COLUMBIA

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Prices

- **In January, the Consumer Price Index for BC rose 0.8%, compared to the same month of 2001.** Energy prices continued to slump, falling 11.3% from the same month of last year. When energy prices are excluded, the CPI shows a 1.9% increase. Food prices were 4.4% higher and household operations and furnishings grew 3.7%. The cost of shelter (-0.8%) and transportation (-2.3%) slipped.

  Across the country, the CPI gained 1.3% in January compared to the same month of the previous year. Food (+4.6%) and alcoholic beverages and tobacco products (+13.1%) pushed prices up. Energy prices fell 7.7%. The largest price increase was seen in Alberta, were the CPI grew 2.7%. Quebec (+1.4%) and Ontario (+1.2%) also experienced large inflation rates. The decline in energy prices drove down the index in Newfoundland and Labrador (-0.2%), Prince Edward Island (-0.6%) and Whitehorse (-0.6%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **The number of business bankruptcies in the province jumped 77.8% in December, compared to the same month of 2000.** Consumer bankruptcies rose 6.9% to reach 621 up from 581 a year earlier. Retail trade industries saw the largest number of bankruptcies with 21 businesses declaring bankruptcy. Nine manufacturing firms in the province went bankrupt.

  Canada-wide, business bankruptcies totaled 748 up 7.5% from December 2000 levels. Consumer bankruptcies rose 16.7%. In Saskatchewan, business bankruptcies fell to 18 from 37 in December 2000. Consumer bankruptcies rose in all provinces except Prince Edward Island (-45.5%). *Source: Industry Canada*

- **The number of new motor vehicles sold in the province (including the territories) dropped 6.8% (seasonally adjusted) in December.** This was the largest decline in the country. Canada-wide, there was a 0.9% increase. Sales of North American passenger cars jumped 3.3% but overseas cars fell 1.9%. Trucks, vans and buses remained flat (-0.1%). Strong growth in Ontario (+4.2%) and Quebec (+3.4%) outweighed declines in all other provinces.

  In 2001, new motor vehicle sales totaled 172,606 in BC and the territories, up 2.9% from 2000 sales. Passenger car purchases climbed 7.1% but truck sales slipped 0.9%. Across the country, Canadians bought 0.7% more new motor vehicles in 2001 then in 2000. Vehicle sales across the country reached 1.6 million vehicles. Alberta saw the largest increase, with sales jumping 7.0%. There were 10.8% more passenger vehicles sold in Alberta in 2001 than in 2000. New motor vehicle sales dropped 6.4% in New Brunswick, the largest decline in the country.
  Source: Statistics Canada

Housing

- **The number of housing starts in BC climbed 29.8% (seasonally adjusted) in January.** This was the second largest gain in the country, behind only Ontario (+32.5%). Housing starts in Canada rose 17.3%. New Brunswick (-52.5%), Prince Edward Island (-44.4%) and Newfound-

Report **The BC Labour Market in 2001**

Did you know...
In the May 2001 provincial election only 0.3% of votes cast were rejected, the lowest rate on record.

land (-20.8%) experienced large declines.
Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

- **The new housing price index increased in both Vancouver (+2.5%) and in Victoria (+0.8%) in December, compared to the same month of 2000.** Across Canada the index climbed 2.8% with the largest growth seen in Ottawa-Hull (+5.8%). In Montreal, prices rose 4.4% from December 2000 levels. Windsor was the only urban centre surveyed to see a decline (-0.1%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

Police Officers

- **The number of police officers employed in BC was 6,895 on June 15, 2001.** This works out to 168 officers for every 100,000 BC residents, down 7.6% from ten years earlier. Across the country there were 57,107 police officers on June 15, 2001. On average there were 184 officers for every 100,000 people. Saskatchewan had the highest concentration of police amongst the provinces, with 193 officers for every 100,000 people. Yukon, with 405 police officers for every 100,000 people, had the highest rate of officers per population.

  The number of female police officers in Canada was up 8% in 2001 from 2000 levels. Fifteen percent of all officers were women.
  Source: Statistics Canada

Restaurant, Caterer and Taverns

For the fifth straight month, restaurant, caterer and tavern receipts were up (+0.8%, seasonally adjusted) in December. Both drinking places (+0.9%) and restaurant and food service establishments (+0.9%) saw a small increase. Restaurant, caterers and taverns performed equally well across the country (+0.8%) as drinking places and restaurant and food service establishments each gained 0.8%. *Source: BC Stats, Statistics Canada*

Port of Vancouver

- **In 2001, cargo through the Port of Vancouver slipped 5% to 72.8 million tonnes.** Container shipment fell 1%. Shipments of forestry products were down 13%, with lumber shipments dropping 14%. The decline in forestry shipments is attributable to weak demand from the Asian market since lumber shipments to the US typically travel over land. Coal shipments, the largest commodity, fell 1% and shipments of wheat were down 14%.
  Source: Vancouver Port Authority

- **For the 19th consecutive year, the number of cruise ship passengers out of Vancouver grew (+0.6%) to reach 1.06 million in the 2001 cruising season (March to October).** After seven years of growth, the number of cruise ship vessels that docked at the Port of Vancouver slipped 1.5% to 331.
  Source: Vancouver Port Authority

Provincial Election

- **In May 2001, 1.6 million people voted in the provincial election.** This accounted for 71.0% of registered voters in the province, down from 71.5% in the previous election. The electoral district of Cowichan-Ladysmith had the best turn out, with 76.7% of registered voters casting ballots. The lowest turn out was in Peace River North, where only 55.1% of registered voters chose to vote. Across the province, 57.6% of the votes were for the British Columbia Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party captured 21.6% and the Green Party Political Association of British Columbia received 12.4% of the votes. The most successful candidate was the Liberal representative for Chilliwack-Kent who captured 74.9% of the electoral district vote.
  Source: Elections BC

Movie Theatres and Drive-Ins

- **In 1999-2000, the number of movie theatres in Canada increased 5.2% to reach 646.** The number of drive-ins remained constant at 68. The average ticket price was $5.78 at the movie theatre and $6.30 at the drive-in. Paid admissions at movie theatres across Canada reached 118 million, while drive-ins welcomed 1.9 million customers. The number of screens available to show movies reached 2,817 at movie theaters, which works out to an average of just over 4 screens per theatre. This is up from 3 screens per theatre five years ago.
  Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Feb. 15, 2002 *Infoline Report:* **The B.C. Labour Market in 2001**

Contact: Youth and Labour Market Services, Min. of Advanced Education, (250) 952-6776
Originally published in Labour Force Statistics, December 2001. Annual subscription $60 plus GST

The B.C. Labour Market in 2001

Employment . . . In 2001, B.C. employment on average fell by 6,700 or 0.3 per cent from 2000. This is B.C.'s first decline in annual average employment since 1982 and 1983 when employment dropped a full percentage over those two years.

The goods sector experienced most of the job loss, down 5.4 per cent or 22,400. *Forestry and logging* was down the most due to the uncertainty of the softwood lumber agreement and the softening US economy. Some industries in the goods sector improved, for example, utilities and construction both saw employment gains.

Employment in the services sector grew 1.0 per cent or 15,700. Most services industries saw little change, with most of the growth coming from *accommodation and food services* and *information, culture and recreation*. These gains were partially offset by employment losses in transportation and warehousing.

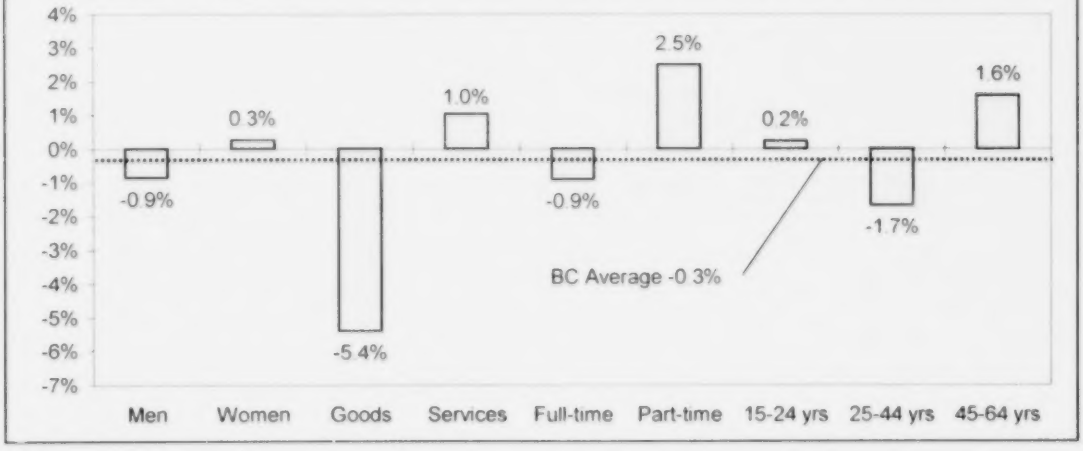
B.C.'s employment loss in 2001 was among full-time workers, who sustained a job loss of 0.9 per cent (down 14,400). This was partially offset the 2.4 per cent increase in part-time employment (up 9,400).

All of the full-time losses were among men (down 1.7 per cent) and these were offset partially by slight gains in full-time work for women (up 0.2 per cent). Men experienced almost all of the part-time job gains (up 6.7 per cent) with a slight increase among women (up 0.3 per cent).

The number of self-employed declined by 1.7 per cent, the largest loss by class of worker. Private sector employment grew by a modest 0.2 per cent while public sector employment remained almost unchanged (-0.1 per cent).

Employment growth of 1.6 per cent for persons aged 45 to 64 was bolstered in part by demographics, as the numbers of baby boomers entering this cohort strongly exceeded pre-baby boomers leaving the cohort. Female youth age 15 to 24 also saw their employment grow. This growth exceeded the job loss among male youth, leaving total youth employment up by 0.2 per cent. Those 25 to 44 years of age, both sexes, experienced most of the employment losses. Employment among this group was down 1.7 per cent compared to the provincial average loss of 0.3 per cent from 2000 to 2001.

Figure 1: Growth in B.C. Employment for Key Variables (actual) 2000 to 2001



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Employment and Unemployment Rates During 2001 . . . As noted in Figure 2, B.C. employment increased only in the first quarter of 2001, then paused and moved down for the rest of the year.

The unemployment rate dipped to a low in March and then pushed steadily up for the rest of the year with the biggest increase in December.

While September 11th obviously had an effect on the B.C. economy, employment during the year dropped more before this date than after it with job losses concentrated in first and the third quarters. In fact January had the biggest employment loss on a month over month basis.

The employment to population ratio dropped in 2001 to 59.2 per cent from 60.2 per cent. This is the lowest rate since 1987.

Unemployment Changes in 2001 . . . The provincial annual average unemployment rate increased to 7.7 per cent in 2001 from 7.2 per cent in 2000. The number of people unemployed increased by 10,400 to 161,100.

The average unemployment rate rose for men but remained little changed for women (see Figure 3). The unemployment rate for men increased by 0.9 percentage points to 8.5 per cent, up from 7.6 per cent in 2000. The biggest increase was among men 25 to 44 years of age and it rose to 8.0 per cent from 6.7 per cent.

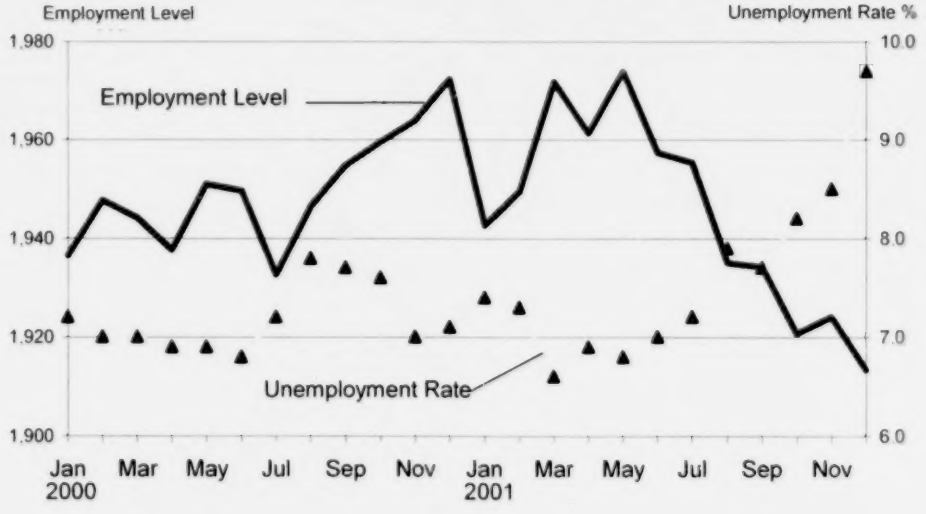
The average unemployment rate for women remained unchanged from 2000. A rate increase among women 25 to 44 years was offset by rate reductions among youth and older women.

There was no change in the average unemployment rate for youth in 2001. It held steady at 13.6 per cent, although it was down slightly for young women and up slightly for young men.

The highest annual unemployment rate increases were among workers 25 to 44 years of age, climbing from 6.5 per cent to 7.4 per cent. The rate increased for both men and women, up 1.3 percentage points for men and 0.3 percentage points for women. Note that this unemployment rate is still well below the average experienced during the 1990's for this age group.

Workers aged 45 to 64 continued to enjoy the lowest unemployment rate of the three groups at 5.4 per cent in 2001 up from 5.3 per cent in 2000.

Figure 2: B.C. Employment Levels and Unemployment Rate
Monthly, seasonally adjusted, age 15+



Employment by Industry . . . B.C.'s goods sector lost 5.4 per cent or 22,400 workers in 2001 while the services sector saw an employment gain of 15,700 or 1.0 per cent. See Figure 4 for a detailed breakdown of employment by industry.

In the goods sector, *forestry and logging* accounted for the bulk of the losses, down 11,000 in 2001 or 29.6 per cent. (This doesn't include losses in forestry manufacturing.) Losses were also sustained in *agriculture* (3,800), *mining, oil and gas* (1,700), and *manufacturing* (9,200). *Utilities and construction* countered the trend with a slight growth in utilities and 2,400 increase (2.0 per cent) in *construction*. Note that this is the first annual employment increase in construction following three years of job losses and despite job loss in December.

In the services sector, most of the net 15,700 growth in jobs came from *information, culture and recreation* (6,800 or 6.8 per cent), *accommodation & food services* (6,600 or 4.0 per cent) and *retail and wholesale trade* (6,300 or 2.1 per cent). *Professional services* also increased significantly, up 4,700 or 3.4 per cent. The rest saw little growth or declined slightly. A notable exception was *transportation and warehousing* which experienced substantial employment losses (7,500 or 6.5 per cent). Job loss in air transport and in forestry-related trucking contributed to returning the industry to 1998 employment levels. *Finance, insurance and real estate* also lost jobs, continuing a trend since 1997. Banking has changed rapidly in recent years with the adoption of automated systems that have replaced many jobs.

Figure 4 provides a long-term perspective on changes in industry employment with annual changes between 1991 and 2001. The services sector has seen much higher growth than the goods sector over this period. Within the goods sector, only manufacturing has averaged above one per cent annual growth since 1991.

Since 1991, the service sector has grown through a number of "new economy" and business services such as: *professional/ scientific/technical services*; *management/ administrative/other support*; and *information/ culture/recreation*. By contrast traditional service industries, including the larger *retail & wholesale trade* and *transportation & warehousing* sectors, have grown slower than average. *Public administration* is the only component in the services sector that has seen average employment loss over the past ten years.

Figure 3: B.C. Unemployment Rates, 2000 vs. 2001

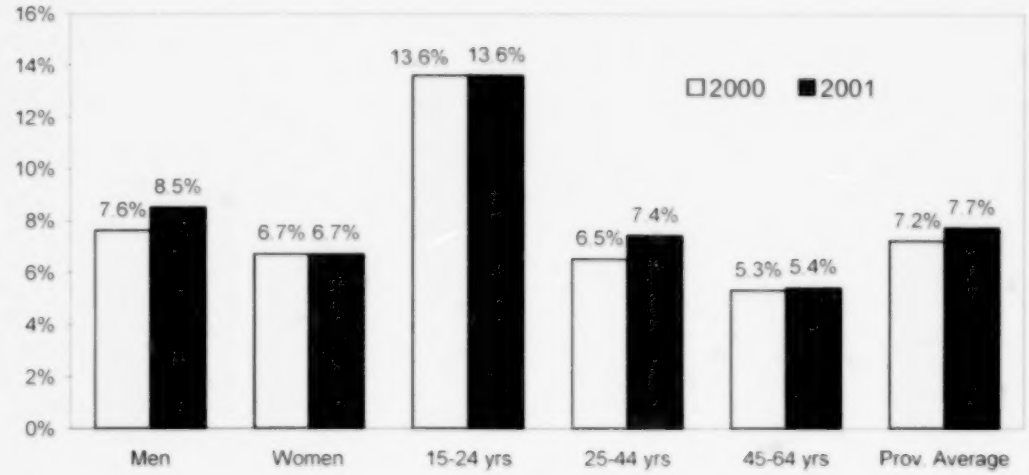


Figure 4: Industry Employment Levels and Growth in B.C.

thousands of persons	1991	1999	2000	2001	% Change 2000-2001	Average Annual % Change 1991-2001
All Industries	**1572.6**	**1906.4**	**1949.1**	**1942.4**	**-0.3%**	**2.4%**
Goods-Producing Sector	**377.6**	**396.5**	**414.4**	**392.0**	**-5.4%**	**0.4%**
Agriculture	32.2	28.6	29.7	25.9	-12.8%	-2.0%
Forestry and Logging	27.5	30.2	37.1	26.1	-29.6%	-0.5%
Fishing, Hunting and Trapping	6.9	4.0	4.8	5.4	12.5%	-2.2%
Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	17.5	14.8	13.4	11.7	-12.7%	-3.3%
Utilities	12.7	11.5	11.3	11.7	3.5%	-0.8%
Construction	112.1	115.3	112.5	114.9	2.1%	0.2%
Manufacturing	168.8	192.2	205.4	196.2	-4.5%	1.6%
Services-Producing Sector	**1194.9**	**1509.8**	**1534.7**	**1550.4**	**1.0%**	**3.0%**
Retail and Wholesale Trade	258.2	308.5	303.2	309.5	2.1%	2.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	95.4	117.9	114.4	106.9	-6.6%	1.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	100.8	120.0	119.5	116.2	-2.8%	1.5%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	93.8	136.7	136.4	141.1	3.4%	5.0%
Management, Administrative and Other Support	37.5	64.1	71.9	73.9	2.8%	9.7%
Educational Services	98.2	127.5	134.9	135.7	0.6%	3.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	154.6	195.3	202.1	203.8	0.8%	3.2%
Information, culture and recreation	67.1	91.7	99.3	106.1	6.8%	5.8%
Accommodation and food services	123.2	152.7	164.0	170.6	4.0%	3.8%
Other services	74.7	105.2	99.3	97.8	-1.5%	3.1%
Public administration	91.5	90.4	89.7	88.8	-1.0%	-0.3%

Regional Labour Markets . . . Despite net job loss in B.C. during 2001, there was employment growth in the large and diversified Lower Mainland/Southwest region. Employment in the region grew 10,000 or 0.8 per cent. Despite this the unemployment rate increased to 6.6 per cent from 6.2 per cent.

Employment growth also occurred in the Thompson/Okanagan (0.5 per cent), Kootenay, Cariboo (1.0 per cent) and Northeast regions (2.2 per cent). The unemployment rate in the Kootenay, Cariboo and Northeast regions also fell in 2001 but stayed the same in the Thompson/Okanagan.

Employment was down by 20,600 or 6.3 per cent in the Vancouver Island/Coast and this included job loss in Victoria. It was also slightly down in the North Coast/Nechako regions. These job losses more than offset the employment growth in the rest of the province.

This is the second year of net employment loss for Victoria and the Vancouver Island/Coast region. The similarities appear to end here, however. While the unemployment rate for Vancouver Island/Coast increased in 2001, by 1.3 percentage points to 9.1 per cent, as is expected with the job loss. However, the unemployment rate for Victoria actually dropped despite the job loss, by 0.6 percentage points to 6.1 per cent, as people withdrew from the labour force.

Figure 5: B.C. Regional Labour Market Changes, Annual Average 2000 and 2001

Development Region	Employment (000's)			Unemployment Rate (%)		Employment/Pop Ratio	
	2000	*2001*	*% Chg*	*2000*	*2001*	*2000*	*2001*
Vancouver Island/Coast	325.9	305.3	-6.3%	7.8%	9.1%	57.9%	54.2%
Lower Mainland/S.W.	1,177.9	1187.9	0.8%	6.2%	6.6%	61.5%	60.7%
Thompson/Okanagan	212.7	213.7	0.5%	9.2%	9.2%	56.0%	54.4%
Kootenay	71.2	71.9	1.0%	10.1%	9.5%	57.8%	57.0%
Cariboo	81.5	83.0	1.9%	9.9%	9.6%	60.7%	61.5%
North Coast/Nechako	47.6	47.4	-0.3%	10.2%	11.0%	63.8%	63.4%
Northeast	32.5	33.2	2.2%	6.1%	5.8%	67.8%	68.0%
B.C.	**1,949.1**	**1942.4**	**-0.3%**	**7.2%**	**7.7%**	**60.2%**	**60.0%**

Infoline

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/01	% change on one year ago
BC	4,102.8	0.9
Canada	31,156.4	1.0
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	2000	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	127,564	5.8
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	124,464	3.9
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	30,664	3.1
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	19,029	3.1
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Nov	2,685	-13.4
Merchandise Exports (raw) Nov	2,157	-24.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Nov	3,218	5.0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Jan '02	one year ago
BC	115.4	0.8
Canada	116.2	1.3
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jan '02	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,129	1.6
Employed - BC	1,940	-0.2
Unemployed - BC	189	24.8
		Jan '01
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.9	7.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.9	6.9
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Feb 13/02	Feb 14/01
Prime Business Rate	3.75	7.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.55	7.20
- 5 year	6.85	7.75
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Feb 13/02	Feb 14/01
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.5906	1.5254
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.6287	0.6542
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jan '02	one year ago
BC	656.05	2.4
Canada	644.11	3.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Released this week by BC STATS

- Labour Force Statistics, January 2002
- Consumer Price Index, January 2002

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 4th Quarter 2001

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